

ten in the nick of time; stop beating out your life against the posts.

Text: John 20: 27: Be not faithless, but believing.

Thomas was a doubter, the pessimist, among the disciples, a characteristic which our Lord must have known when he selected him, and the reason must be fraught with profitable lessons. In all ages of the church there would be people who from natural inheritance would find it difficult to believe. They would constantly be assailed with doubts. It is not a virtue to be rewarded but a defect to be healed, and if we are constituted like Thomas it will be well if we note the Lord's manner of dealing with him.

This habit of Thomas of looking on the dark side dates back from our text. When Christ heard that Lazarus was dead, and proposed to go to Bethany and awake him from this sleep, the disciples fearing that the Jews would kill him remonstrated. The Lord in his reply to them plainly indicated that it would be safe for him to go, but that made no impression on Thomas. The despondent disciple said: Let us also go that we may die with him. He was faithful and loving, but he could not look on the bright side of things.

On another occasion when Christ was discoursing about the many mansions, and added; Whither I go, ye know, and the way ye know, Thomas declared that he knew neither. And so on the occasion of our text, he goes off to himself, as one overwhelmed with despair, who was so deep in the blues that he couldn't bear to be with the other disciples. Doubtless they were indulging in some kind of vague hope, a state of mind which seemed so preposterous to Thomas that he could not endure the thought or sight of it. What a sermon he missed, and how his misery was prolonged more than the others. They had seen the Lord, but he would believe no testimony but that of his own sight and touch. How tenderly the Lord dealt with him at the last, and how complete was the surrender of his unbelief. Nevertheless his reward would not be so great as that of a brighter, more unquestioning faith.

It is always better to look on the true side than simply on the bright side, but the lesson we learn from the history of Thomas is that with the Christian the true side and the bright side always go together. Think for a moment; is there any conceivable reason why a Christian should be floundering around in the dumps? Certainly no external reason for all things must turn out well with him, all things must work together for his good. Doubt and despair are his most vital contradictions; they must not be entertained for a moment. In whatever concerns our Lord, and our relations to him, let there be a wide-ness of the sea. Take your head out of that hole in the ground and bathe your brow in the light of celestial certitudes.

If some of us would pray more we would grumble less.

STEPS NOT STRAIGHTENED—Prov. 4: 12

J. M. BOWMAN

It is often quite surprising to note that the word of God frequently so clearly contradicts prevailing beliefs, notions and experiences; that one is stopped short by it and led to take a fresh look at his bearings, and often too, to find that they are all wrong and must be righted. But that is what scripture is for, since I think of it. For Paul said that it is for correction in righteousness. (II Tim. 3: 16.)

And this scripture in Proverbs may well be meditated upon by most of us. It plainly states that the steps of those who are in the way of wisdom, in the Lord's way, shall not be straightened, not pinched and hard and difficult.

But the experience of many who "guess" or "hope" that they are in the way, and especially the lack of heartiness with which they travel would certainly warrant one in concluding that at least in their case this text is not true. Their steps are difficult and cramped and pinched. And many argue earnestly that it must be so and that if one is not continually cramped and hampered and living a very narrow uninviting life he is not in the way at all. Jesus said that the gate is strait, difficult, and the way narrow by which one enters life, (Matt. 7: 14) but not the life itself. May it not be that with these they have not yet really taken Christ? Have not really surrendered to him and taken him to be their life? "He that hath the Son hath the life; he that hath not the Son of God hath not the life." (I John 5: 12 R. V.) The apparent bad taste and poor relish of many who profess to have entered it, for the way of life certainly is no glory to God and is very effective in keeping many in a lost condition. But the real fact is, that it is a pleasant way, "Her ways are ways of pleasantness and all her paths are peace. (Prov. 3: 17.) It is away where one enjoys liberty. "I will walk at liberty, for I have sought thy precepts." (Psa. 119: 45.) It is a happy, joyous way. "Great peace have they that love thy law; and they have no occasion of stumbling." (Psa. 119: 165.) It is a safe way. "If thou runnest, thou shalt not stumble." (Prov. 4: 12; 3: 23.) But in the only other way there are stumbling stones and pitfalls in abundance. It is "darkness; they know not at what they stumble." (v. 19; Jno. 11: 10; I Jno. 2: 10.)

Glenford, Ohio.

The Mission Field

Report of the Missionary Board for November

RECEIPTS GENERAL FUND

M. S. H., Allentown, Pa.,	\$ 2 00
J. H., Philadelphia, Pa.,	1 50
H. C. W., Lunsdale, Pa.,	1 00
J. S. C. S., Maryville, Mo.,	70
Mrs. P. M.,	1 00
Fairview Church, Ind.,	5 11
Salem " " R. E.,	4 82
N. H. " "	3 65

M. O. H., Columbus, O.,	35
E. C. M. G., Warriors Mark, Pa.,	1 00
A. J. H., Adrian Mo.,	1 00
Brethren Church, Adrian, Mo.,	2 10
Allentown church, Allentown, Pa.,	3 34
W. & J. M., Nevada, Mo.,	2 00
King's Children, Flora, Ind.,	2 00
" " Ashland, O.,	2 50
Mrs. S., Allentown, Pa.,	1 00
	\$ 35 07

CHICAGO FUND

Mrs. C. M. B., Waterloo, Iowa,	\$ 1 00
C. F., Dallas Center, Iowa,	75
Missionary Barrels Garrison, Iowa,	1 22
Mrs. E. H., Waterloo, Iowa,	50
Mrs. B. F. P., Lanark, Ill.,	25
Z. T. L., " "	25
Mrs. J. S., Chicago, Ill.,	4 11
Mrs. H., " "	20
" M., " "	10
G. D., " "	10
A. H., " "	05
Church Collection, Chicago Ill.,	3 81
Sabbath-school Collection, Chicago, Ill.,	2 17
	\$ 14 51

RECEIPTS WASHINGTON FUND

Washington City Church,	\$ 11 62
Penna., S. S. C. E.,	5 00
Cash,	5 00
Eld., G. A. C., Fishers Hill, Va.,	2 00
" W. H. S., Meadow Mills, Va.,	3 00
" D. C. M., Roanoke, Va.,	4 40
" J. M. T., Hagerstown, Md.,	9 10
Mrs. G. D. P., Martinsburg, Pa.,	1 25
Proceeds of Eld. W. M. Lyons canvass of Pa.,	115 83
	\$ 157 20

TOTAL RECEIPTS

General Fund,	\$ 35 07
Chicago " "	14 51
Washington Fund,	157 20
Total receipts for November,	\$ 206 78
Amount previously reported,	335 20
Total receipts,	\$ 541 98

EXPENDITURES

Stove for Chicago Mission,	7 00
Fuel " " "	2 27
Sundries for Chicago Mission,	83
Cash paid direct to Sadie Gibbons,	4 41
" " " " W. M. Lyon,	157 20
Order No. 43 R. J. McClure, rent,	20 00
" " 44, Eld. J. O. Talley,	20 00
	211 71
Expenditures previously reported,	335 63
	\$ 547 34

Readers will notice that payments have been \$5 36 above the receipts up to Dec. 1.

Brother Talley having taken charge of the Chicago Mission he must henceforth be supported by the church if the work is to be continued.

There is at present no money on hand whatever and the family expenses of city life are large and must be promptly paid. I trust the brethren and friends will appreciate the circumstances and not embarrass the Board, or rather our missionaries by withholding the necessary support.

The sacrifice made by Brother Talley in leaving one of the most desirable charges in the brotherhood to take up the Chicago work, should appeal to every brother and sister in the church. It is an act of faith in God, and God's children: will we honor that faith or will we cause our brother to lose his faith in his brethren?

Our expenses are now at least one hundred and seventy-five dollars per month. The ratio of receipts thus far this year has been one hundred and thirty-seven dollars, hence there must be an increase of at least thirty-eight dollars per month to enable the Board to meet its obligated expenses. I am thus explicit so that every one may just know what has to be done. I am not expecting failure, but if failure